



# DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## INFORMATION SERVICE

### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1940.

#### BUFFALOES, ELK, AND MULE DEER TO BE SOLD TO PUBLIC

The Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior, today reported to Secretary Harold L. Ickes that 217 surplus animals will be sold from four National Wildlife Refuges.

These surplus animals include 109 buffaloes, 58 elk, and 50 mule deer. The animals can be purchased for \$30 to \$60, depending on the animal and type of purchase made. Animals may be purchased alive and crated; butchered, dressed, and quartered; or butchered and hog-dressed.

Live animals crated for shipment weigh about as follows: Buffaloes, 850 to 1,100 pounds; elk, 600 to 900 pounds; and deer, 350 to 400 pounds, according to the size and age of the individual animal.

Forty buffaloes, 20 elk, and 50 mule deer will be sold from the National Bison Range, Moiese, Montana. The Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, Cache, Oklahoma, will dispose of 40 buffaloes and 25 elk. Twenty-five buffaloes and 8 elk will be sold from the Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge in Valentine, Nebraska, and 4 buffaloes and 5 elk from the Sullys Hill National Game Preserve, Fort Totten, North Dakota.

Big-game enthusiasts need have no fear that the big-game herds are being disbanded, however, because the sale is a yearly event. Surplus animals on these big-game refuges are sold to avoid overgrazing of the ranges within the sanctuaries administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

To insure widest possible distribution of buffalo and elk meat, not more than 50 percent of the animals available at any of the refuges will be sold to any one individual, company, or organization for butchering.

In the sale of these animals preference will be given to applications for purchasing them alive for propagation or exhibition. Surplus animals not sold may be obtained by State, county, city, or municipal zoos, parks, or game preserves, or by private institutions desiring such animals for propagation or exhibition, at the cost of capturing, crating, and transporting.

Further details of the sales of these animals may be obtained by writing to the Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C.

- C -

in abundance of salmon and herring resources of southeastern Alaska. Finally, a new laboratory has been built at Milford, Connecticut for biological investigations into the methods of cultivation and utilization of marine seafoods--particularly oysters and other shellfish.

Other details in the report include data on the 1938 catch of fishery products (the latest collected). In all sections of the United States and Alaska except the Mississippi area, the combined catch shows a decline of 21 percent as compared with 1937; byproducts decreased 17 percent; cured fish about 5 percent; and packaged fish, 2 percent.

The total catch of fishery products in the United States and Alaska, as based on the most recent surveys, amounted to 4,253,445,000 pounds, valued at \$93,547,000. More than 130,000 fishermen were employed in making this catch.

The production of canned fishery products in the United States and Alaska during 1938 amounted to 667,527,840 pounds, valued at \$83,445,889; the output of byproducts was valued at \$30,576,367; the production of frozen fishery products, excluding packaged products, amounted to 117,125,519 pounds, valued at \$7,800,000; and fresh and frozen packaged fish and shellfish, 216,661,255 pounds, valued at \$27,243,645. Based on surveys for 1938 in all sections except the Mississippi River area (and for 1931 in that area), the production of cured fishery products amounted to 102,617,256 pounds, valued at \$14,865,530. It is estimated that about 680,000,000 pounds of fresh fishery products (excluding packaged fish and shellfish) valued at about \$50,000,000 were marketed during 1938. The total marketed is estimated at \$214,000,000.

Cooperation with Federal, State, and other agencies for the year included the Forest Service, to whom were assigned about 20 $\frac{1}{2}$  million fish for stocking of

suitable waters; National Park Service; Tennessee Valley Authority; Bureau of Reclamation; and State game and fish commissions of Alabama, New Jersey, and others, in various projects. WPA allotments totaling \$188,047 were allocated to 20 fish-cultural stations for repairs, improvements, and further developmental work.

Revised regulations for the protection of the commercial fisheries of Alaska were issued by the Secretary of the Interior on January 4, to be effective in the 1940 season. The new regulations were based upon the evidence presented at Alaska hearings and in supplemental briefs, as well as upon data gathered by the Bureau's patrol force and biological investigators. Commercial salmon fishing in the Bristol Bay area was restricted to approximately 50 percent of normal operations for the purpose of rebuilding the weak cyclical run of red salmon which occurs in this area in the years divisible by five.

Separate regulations were issued on May 28, 1940, with regard to the protection of game fish and other fish in the fresh waters of Alaska, as distinct from the regulations pertaining to the commercial fisheries. This separate publication was found advisable in view of the rapid development of sport fishing in the Territory in recent years. The new regulations define game fish and establish limitations on the time, means, methods, and extent of angling in the fresh waters of Alaska.

Output of fish and eggs at the Federal hatcheries during the fiscal year 1940 approximated 7,400,000,000, in comparison with the 8,042,000,000 production of the previous year. This drop is in part attributed to a curtailment in production of cod, haddock, and flounders, governed by weather conditions, and the intensity of local commercial fishery operations. However, 24 different species were distributed in increased numbers, among them six species of trout and one variety of Pacific salmon, shad, striped bass, buffalofish, and lobster. Some 45 different species, altogether, were handled at the various hatcheries.

Despite the reduction in the total output there was little change in the actual number of the fingerlings and larger sizes of game fish. The production of game and pan species amounted to 151,723,000, an actual as well as proportional increase. These forms comprised 2.5 percent of the total output, "but it must be recognized," the report states, "that practically all of the species propagated are sought for recreation at certain times or places."

Salient features of the Bureau's work concerned with activities and welfare of the commercial fisheries and industries included establishment of radio outlets in Boston, Chicago, Jacksonville, and New Orleans, for the daily broadcast of current, statistical market news reports. In addition to the coverage of market news in these centers, the daily releases from each office were augmented by pertinent data telegraphed to it from the other offices, as well as from market news reporters located at important producing points along the coasts.

The chief study conducted by the scientific division of the Bureau during the year was that relating to the shad fishery of the Atlantic coast. These investigations here confirm the opinion expressed a year ago that the principal cause of depletion is overfishing rather than pollution or obstruction of runs. The report advises that recovery can best be brought about by providing a spawning escapement, in such depleted areas as the Chesapeake Bay and the waters of North Carolina, which will be substantially equivalent to that which has proved adequate in the Hudson River.